

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 01917 260544Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8582

INFO DIA WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 1917

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH

SUBJ: POSSIBLE MILITARY PRESSURE ON THANIN TO RE-SHUFFLE

CABINET

REF: 76 BANGKOK 32784

SUMMARY: IN CONVERSATION JAN 25 WITH A SENIOR POLITICAL FIGURE FORMERLY ACTIVE IN THE NEW FORCE PARTY AND A LEADING THAI BUSINESSMAN AND FORMER SURGEON WITH CLOSE PERSONAL AND BUSINESS CONNECTIONS TO THE THAI MILITARY, FOLLOWING TOPICS OF CURRENT POLITICAL INTEREST EMERGED. END SUMMARY.

1. POLITICAL FIGURE SAID THAT HE WAS NOT INVOLVED IN POLITICS ANY MORE AND DID NOT HAVE ANY INSIDE KNOWLEDGE OF THE PRESENT SITUATION. HE FELT, HOWEVER, THAT A CHANGE IN THE CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT WAS LIKELY. HE SAID THAT A TELEVISED INTERVIEW ON JAN 24 WITH YUANG IAMSILA (A POLITICIAN AND CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF PRAPHAT CHARUSATHIAN) AND AN UNNAMED "MAN ON THE STREET" WAS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THE THANIN GOVERNMENT. THE TWO MEN REFERRED TO THE RTG AS A "GOVERNMENT OF JUDGES" WHICH FAILED TO  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 01917 260544Z

UNDERSTAND THE PEOPLE AND WAS INCAPABLE OF ACCOMPLISHING ANYTHING. THE POLITICAL FIGURE SAID THAT HE FOUND THE INTERVIEW STARTLING UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, AND COULD ONLY CONCLUDE THAT IT HAD SOME OFFICIAL SANCTION. HE SAID THAT HE FELT THAT SOME ELEMENTS AMONG THE MILITARY WERE PREPARING THE PUBLIC FOR THE REMOVAL OF THANIN.

2. THE BUSINESSMAN AGREED AND SAID THAT HE TOO EXPECTED A CHANGE IN THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT'S MAKEUP. HE SAID THAT HE WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED WITH INVESTOR CONFIDENCE AND FELT THAT UNLESS SOME CHANGES WERE MADE IN THE CABINET, THIS CONFIDENCE WOULD NOT RETURN. THE BUSINESSMAN SAID THAT THANIN HAD TOLD HIM PERSONALLY ABOUT ONE MONTH AGO THAT HE WAS AWARE OF CRITICISMS OF HIS GOVERNMENT, BUT THAT HE COULD NOT MAKE ANY CHANGES IN HIS CABINET HIMSELF WITHOUT LOSING FACE.

3. THE BUSINESSMAN CLAIMED THAT HE HAD MET WITH GENERAL KRIANGSAK CHAMANAN ON JAN 21, FOLLOWING A MEETING BETWEEN KRIANGSAK AND THANIN. KRIANGSAK TOLD HIM THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED A CABINET RESHUFFLE WITH THANIN. THANIN WAS REPORTEDLY UPSET AT THE PROSPECT OF HAVING TO RESHUFFLE THE CABINET BECAUSE HE HAD HAND PICKED ITS MEMBERS. HE WOULD BE WILLING TO MAKE THE CHANGES, HOWEVER, IF THE PRIME MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL DIRECTED HIM TO DO SO. THIS ACTION WOULD SAVE FACE FOR HIM, AND HE WOULD THEN BE ABLE TO CONTINUE AS PRIME MINISTER. THE BUSINESSMAN STATED THAT KRIANGSAK GIVES THANIN REGULAR AND FREQUENT ADVICE ON ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL MATTERS.

4. THE BUSINESSMAN SAID THAT IN HIS OPINION, THANIN WOULD ULTIMATELY HAVE TO STEP DOWN. HE ADDED THAT ALL OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PMAC WERE IN AGREEMENT THAT THANIN SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM POWER.

5. THE BUSINESSMAN SAID THAT HE MEETS WITH KRIANGSAK REGULAR TO DISCUSS BUSINESS MATTERS. HE TOLD THE POLITICAL FIGURE THAT HE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BANGKO 01917 260544Z

HAD WANTED TO ARRANGE A MEETING WITH KRIANGSAK, BUT THE LATTER HAD BEEN UNABLE TO DO SO BECAUSE OF HIS CURRENT TRIP TO BURMA. THE BUSINESSMAN SAID THAT HE WOULD ARRANGE A MEETING IN THE NEAR FUTURE, BECAUSE HE FELT KRIANGSAK SHOULD HAVE THE BENEFIT OF DIFFERING OPINIONS. THE POLITICAL FIGURE ASKED, ONLY HALF JOKINGLY, IF, AFTER EXPRESSING HIS OPINION, HE WOULD BE ARRESTED. THE BUSINESSMAN ANSWERED THAT HE WOULD PERSONALLY GUARANTEE HIS SAFETY.

6. COMMENT: THERE IS CONSIDERABLE SPECULATION IN POLITICAL CIRCLES ABOUT EARLY CHANGES IN THE THAI CABINET, WITH SEVERAL SOURCES SUGGESTING FEB 15. THIS DATE IS REPORTED TO BE SIGNIFICANT, AS IT CONFORMS TO ASTROLOGICAL PREDICTIONS THAT IT IS A POINT OF POLITICAL TURBULENCE.

7. THE BUSINESSMAN, WHO INDICATED THAT HE BELIEVED IN ASTROLOGY, SAID THAT COMPETENT ASTROLOGERS WERE ALL PREDICTING SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR THANIN IN THE COMING MONTHS. HE SAID THAT THANIN, AN AMATEUR ASTROLOGER HIMSELF, WAS RELYING ON HIS OWN PREDICTIONS

RATHER THAN THOSE OF OTHER ASTROLOGERS, AND WAS PERHAPS  
IGNORING THE DANGER. HE SAID THAT, AS A DOCTOR, HE NEVER TREATED  
HIMSELF, BUT WENT TO OTHER PHYSICIANS WHEN HE WAS ILL. HE SUGGESTED  
THAT THANIN SHOULD DO THE SAME. (SEE REF FOR AN EARLIER REPORT  
OF THANIN'S ASTROLOGICAL PREDICTIONS BEARING ON HIS POLITICAL  
FUTURE.)  
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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009